

# 9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

PLENARY SESSIONS

# Socio-Economic Opportunities and Programs

USWCC Driving Economic Leadership

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U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce

# **Economic Leadership**





# U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce™

- The **U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce™** was established in 2001 to revolutionize the economic opportunities and impact of women.
- The USWCC has 500,000 members and reaches over 1 million women around the globe.
- The USWCC is non-captive we are committed solely to advancing economic opportunities for small businesses.



### **Business Growth**

Even though the number of (majority-owned) womenowned firms grew 42.3% between 1997 and 2006, their combined annual sales grew only 4.4%.



### **Business Growth**

- The large jump in the number of women-owned firms over the last 10 years is a result of women:
  - Being paid only 77 cents on the dollar as compared to men.
  - Not being promoted.
  - Not having flexibility to take care of their families.



### **Business Growth**

- There are 10 million women-owned firms in the U.S. representing one-third of all businesses.
- We have a goal of only 5%, and yet we only receive 3% in Federal Contracts.
- Loss of revenues calculates to over 5.6 Billion dollars annually!



# **Opening Doors to Federal Contracting Opportunities**



### **Economic Leadership**

 The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce is a strong driving force for the advancement of economic opportunities for all small business.



### A "Fair Portion"

• It is imperative that our country provides a fair proportion of federal government contracts and dollars to small businesses.



### A "Fair Portion"

 And, it is equally important that this fair portion reach to all socioeconomic sectors.



# Focus on the Keys to Opportunity

 The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce takes an active role in opening the doors to opportunity.







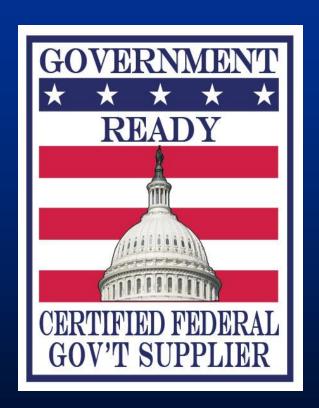
### **Preparedness**

- Preparedness is the foundation
  - Business preparedness
  - Competitiveness and resources
  - Understanding the federal marketplace



### **Preparedness**

National and Regional Conferences and Summits





### **Opportunity**

- Fighting to Assure the Marketplace is Open and Fair
  - Pro Small Business Policies
  - Accountability
  - Transparency
  - Industry and Organizational Partners



# **Opportunity**

### Examples

- Women's Federal Procurement Program
- Small Business Set-Asides
- Bundling and Consolidation
- Partnership with MBRT
- Reports, Courts, Testimony



### **Opportunity**

Partnership with NASBC.org



National Association of Small Business Contractors



### **Awareness**

- Access and Information are Key
  - Small Business Contractors' Forum (online community with news, updates, and advocacy and opportunities)
  - Agency and Prime Contractor Spotlights
  - Virtual meetings, conference calls and email notices on important opportunities



### **Awareness**

- Awareness of Issues and Barriers
  - It is vitally important that small business owners stay aware of policy and contracting issues that may jeopardize our "fair portion" of federal contracts
  - Speak up on important issues





#### **Timeline:**

- [1994] The Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994 (FASA) set an overall goal of 5% for womenowned businesses.
- The Act did not, however, establish a specific procurement mechanism for accomplishing that goal. And between 1994 and 2000, the federal government never even came close to meeting this 5% goal.



#### **Timeline:**

- [2000] To address the ongoing shortfall of contracts with women-owned firms, Congress passed the Equity in Contracting for Women Act of 2000 on December 21, 2000.
- [2004] On October 29, 2004, the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce, in support of its 500,000 members, brought suit against the SBA



#### Timeline:

[2005] The SBA filed a Motion to Dismiss which was denied by the court (on December 8, 2005) and who further noted that the SBA "...had sabotaged, whether intentional or not, the implementation of a procurement program..." and concluded that "a deadline is in order."



#### **Timeline:**

- [2007] May 2, 2007, the study was released. The study took four looks – using four combinations:
  - Market whole and the number of contracts awarded,
  - Only those in CCR and number of contracts awarded,
  - Market whole and the dollar amount awarded,
  - Only those in CCR and dollar amount awarded.



#### Timeline:

- [2007] The study finds women-owned businesses are underrepresented in 87 percent of all industries.
- [2008] The SBA publishes a proposed rule that is a gross perversion of what Congress intended greatly limiting the effectiveness and mandating that every federal agency must find that they have discriminated against women prior to utilizing the set-aside.



#### **Essential elements:**

- Assure the determination of underrepresented industry status with respect to Federal procurement contracting is open to appeal and applies to each agency.
- The SBA should comply with the law not rewrite it.
   Our legislative body provided clear instructions regarding the implementation of PL 106-554.



#### **Key elements:**

- Accept all existing federal government certifications.
- Get the online certification program up quickly.
- Assure quick turnaround on certifications.



#### **Key elements:**

- Do not make the women's program more restrictive than the service disabled veteran's program.
- Accept ALL local government women-owned certifications as reciprocals in this program (they are free of corporate aims to control women's certification marketplace).



- Currently we are working on three fronts to get the program implemented
  - Court System: Next Status hearing set for October
  - We have demanded the current proposed regulations be pulled and a new rule that reflects the will of congress
  - Working with Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle in Senate and House



### Other Current Issues

- **Small Business Size Standards**
- **Small Business Healthcare Policy**



# **Upcoming Meetings** and Events



### **Summer 2008**

- U.S. Dept. of Energy Small Business Conference (Small Business Contractors' Forum) – June 24-26, 2008
- U. S. Agency Spotlight: U.S. Department of State July 8, 2008
- U.S. Navy Women-Owned Business Day July 23, 2008
- National Small Business Federal Contracting Summit – July 23, 24 & 25, 2008



### **USWCC**





### **NASBC**





### Thank You

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We are at your service!

